

The sanctity of the oath which every citizen must take in any legal proceeding to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth;" and

The viability of our judicial system, the rule of law, and the principle of "equal justice under law."

A FINAL NOTE TO MY FELLOW OKLAHOMANS

Holding public office is a special privilege and I am continually grateful to the people of Oklahoma for the opportunity to serve in the United States Senate.

During the past weeks and months, I have received thousands of letters, e-mails, faxes, phone calls and other communications relative to the impeachment trial and all of the subject matters surrounding it. Many have expressed strongly held views on one side or the other, often urging me to vote in accord with their wishes and thinking. My overworked staff and I have done our best to digest and respond to these inquiries and comments as best we could. To those who may have not yet received a personal response, I want to express my appreciation for sharing your thoughts, your ideas, and your concerns.

Whether you agree or disagree, I want you to know that my votes for conviction on the two Articles of Impeachment represent my best judgment, based on my analysis of the facts, the law, the Constitution and what I believe is best for our country. They do not represent the results of any poll or political calculation about what may be popular, either in Oklahoma or elsewhere.

I have viewed the trial as a serious Constitutional duty and have listened and deliberated with profound sense of history and patriotism. I have sought to respect the process and preserve for future generations those wise procedural precedents, including the rule of law, that have served this nation so well for over 200 years.

I have stated my views and I accept the result of the trial. I harbor no personal bitterness or hatred toward the President. It is time to look to the future. I hope all of us on all sides of these issues can unite in a prayer for the future of our country and for the ideals of freedom and justice it stands for in the world. God Bless America.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask for a brief moment to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CENSURE RESOLUTION OF PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I just want to point out to everyone who is interested that a censure resolution has been entered at the desk. It has 38 cosponsors.

Mr. President, during these trying days, the question has been asked of many of us: "What will we tell our children about this sordid period in our Nation's history?"

Mr. President, Members of the Senate, I had hoped to be able to tell my granddaughter and, indeed, the rest of our Nation, that the United States Senate had come together in bipartisan fellowship to approve a censure resolution that would deliver a clear message that the behavior of President William Jefferson Clinton has been inappropriate, intolerable and unacceptable.

Unfortunately, some in this body have forestalled our ability to bring such a resolution to the floor of the Senate for a vote. This I regret deeply.

There are moments in history when we are able to rise up against the forces driving us apart and come together with a united purpose. I believe that the censure resolution provided us with just such an opportunity.

While not a cure-all, the resolution is a way to share with our children and the rest of our nation our findings, our sentiments, our belief that the actions of the President are a violation of the trust of the American people and have brought shame and dishonor upon the presidency and the man.

But as has been made clear, those of us who truly believe a strong censure is the appropriate resolution in this case are being prevented from bringing it to the floor of this Senate for a vote.

The main co-sponsor is the Senator from Utah, Mr. ROBERT BENNETT. In all, it is co-sponsored by 36 Senators—over 1/3 of this Senate.

The words of the resolution were strong, but they are fitting words and I believe a bipartisan majority of the Senate would be prepared to vote for this censure resolution if it were permitted to come to a vote today.

Over the past few weeks, I have worked very closely with a large number of Senators to develop a bipartisan resolution, largely because I felt it so important that anyone who looks at this shabby episode of American history understands that while one may not vote to convict and remove a president, one can have profound dismay and concern about the misconduct that was inherent in the articles of impeachment.

That is why I regret deeply that some have seen fit to prevent us from voting on a censure resolution.

Because that cannot happen today, I have joined with the cosponsors of this resolution to formally present it to the Senate and record it in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, making clear for all time the strong censure of this President and condemnation of his actions by at least one-third of the U.S. Senate.

Earlier today, I voted against conviction and removal of the President on both articles of impeachment. I did not believe the House managers established beyond a reasonable doubt that this President is guilty of perjury and obstruction of justice.

Although I deplore the circumstances that have brought us to this point, I do not believe they present a clear and present danger to the functioning of our government, and therefore this President, who has been a good President for the people of the United States, should not be convicted and removed from office.

However, I feel very strongly and sincerely that the acquittal of the President on the articles of impeachment should not be the Senate's last word on the President's conduct, and that without further action such as a resolution of censure, the wrong message about the President's actions and the Senate's views thereon will be sent to the country.

One of the most worthwhile experiences of my Senate career has been listening to the remarks of the Senators over the past three days on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Each one gave substantial deliberation, serious thought and research and tried his or her level best to maintain their oath of impartiality.

It should be clear that this was not an easy time. It should be clear that every one in the Senate at every minute of every day wished this were not happening. But we found ourselves caught up in a constitutional requirement that gave us little choice.

I hope we come out of this with a deeper understanding of the divisions and polarization, which all of this has caused, and that every effort can be made, not only by our leadership, but by every member of the Senate in every issue that comes before us to seek out a bipartisanship and to work together to solve the problems facing our nation.

A good start in this process would have been to have allowed a vote on the censure resolution. I hope that when we return from the President's Day recess, we will do better.

INTENT BEHIND THE CENSURE RESOLUTION

I want to clear up once and for all the intent behind our censure resolution.

The resolution does not express legal conclusions in the court of impeachment. Rather, it is a legislative measure, expressing our conclusions regarding the President's conduct.